CLAIM AMENDMENTS

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application or previous response to office action:

1-41. **(Cancelled)**.

42. **(Currently Amended)** A remote data acquisition and transmission system for beverage dispensing equipment, the system comprising:

an application controller;

an application host operably coupled to the application controller;

the application controller operably coupled to and interfacing with **the** ~~**remote**~~ beverage dispensing equipment from which operating data is acquired by the application controller; **[[and]]**

the application host including a wide area network interface for communicating with a network operations center**[[.]]** **;**

a network operations center communicating with the application host via a wide area network to receive the operation data acquired by the application controller from the beverage dispensing equipment; and

the network operation center maintaining a database storing the operation data from the beverage dispensing equipment and providing secure third party access to the database.

43. (Original) The system of Claim 42, wherein the application host is directly connected to and associated with the application controller.

44. (Original) The system of Claim 42, wherein the wide area network interface of the application host comprises a WAN wireless transceiver.

45. (Original) The system of Claim 44, wherein the WAN wireless transceiver communicates across a wireless data network.

46. (Original) The system of Claim 42, wherein the wide area network interface of the application host comprises a WAN wire-line interface.

47. (Original) The system of Claim 42, wherein the operation data acquired from the beverage dispensing equipment comprises product dispensing and inventory data.

48. (Original) The system of Claim 42, wherein the operation data acquired from the beverage dispensing equipment comprises equipment status data.

49. **(Cancelled)**.

50. **(Cancelled)**.

51. **(New)** A remote data acquisition and transmission system for beverage dispensing equipment, comprising:

first and second application controllers, the first application controller interfacing with a first beverage dispensing device to acquire operation data from the first beverage dispensing device, and the second application controller interfacing with a second beverage dispensing device to acquire operation data from the second beverage dispensing device;

an application host communicating with at least one of the first and second application controllers via a local area network (LAN) to receive the operation data from the first and second beverage dispensing devices;

a wide area network (WAN) interface in the application host for communicating with a network operations center;

the first and second application controllers and the application host operable to autoconfigure the local area network;

a first transceiver in the first application controller that transmits the operation data from the first beverage dispensing device to the second beverage dispensing device;

a second transceiver in the second application controller that receives the operation data from the first beverage dispensing device and relays the operation data from the first beverage dispensing device to the application host on behalf of the first application controller, wherein the second transceiver also transmits the operation data from the second beverage dispensing device to the application host;

the network operations center communicating with the application host via the WAN to receive the operation data acquired by the first and second application controllers; and

the network operations center transmitting data for the first and second beverage dispensing devices via the WAN to the application host, the application host transmitting the data to at least one of the first and second application controllers via the LAN, and the first and second application controllers providing the data to the first and second beverage dispensing devices, respectively.

52. **(New)** The system of Claim 51, wherein:

the LAN is supported by wireless transmissions;

the application host and each of the first and second application controllers comprises a wireless LAN transceiver for communicating via the LAN; and

the application host comprises a hand-held portable computer.

53. **(New)** The system of Claim 51, wherein:

the local area network is supported by wire-line transmissions; and

the application host and each application controller comprise a wire-line LAN transceiver for communicating via the local area network.

54. **(New)** The system of Claim 51 wherein the autoconfiguration comprises configuring the second application controller to operate as a relay for the first application controller when the first application controller is not within a primary communication range of the application host.

55. (**New**) The system of Claim 51, further comprising the application host directly connected to and associated with one of the application controllers.

56. (**New**) The system of Claim 51, wherein the wide area network interface of the application host comprises a WAN wireless transceiver.

57. (**New**) The system of Claim 56, wherein the WAN wireless transceiver communicates across a digital paging network.

58. (**New**) The system of Claim 51, wherein the wide area network interface of the application host comprises a WAN wire-line interface.

59. (**New**) The system of Claim 51 wherein each of the first and second application controllers interfaces with the respective beverage dispensing device via a serial interface to a beverage dispensing controller.

60. (**New**) The system of Claim 59, wherein each application controller interfaces via the serial interface comprising a beverage dispensing device multi-drop bus.

61. (**New**) The system of Claim 51, wherein the operation data acquired from each beverage dispensing device comprises product dispensing and inventory data.

62. (**New**) The system of Claim 51, wherein the operation data comprises equipment status data.

63. (**New**) The system of Claim 51, further comprising the network operations center maintains a database storing the operation data and provides secure third party access to the database.

64. (New) The system of Claim 63, further comprising the secure third party access to the database provided via a web browser connecting across an internet based network.

65. (New) A remote data acquisition and transmission system for beverage dispensing devices, comprising:

at least first and second application controllers, the first application controller interfacing with a beverage dispensing controller associated with a beverage dispensing device from which operation data is acquired by the first application controller, and the second application controller interfacing with a beverage dispensing controller associated with a beverage dispensing device from which operation data is acquired by the second application controller;

an application host communicating with at least one of the application controllers via at least one local area network to receive the operation data from the associated beverage dispensing devices, the application host comprising a wide area network interface for communicating with a network operations center;

the network operations center communicating with the application host via the wide area network to receive the operation data acquired by the first and second application controllers from the associated beverage dispensing devices;

the first and second application controllers and the application host operating to autoconfigure the local area network upon initialization;

the first application controller operating as a relay when necessary to establish communication between the application host and the second application controller, such that the first application controller relays the operation data from the associated beverage dispensing device to the application host on behalf of the second application controller;

the network operations center maintaining a database storing the operation data from the associated beverage dispensing devices and providing third party access to the database;

the network operations center communicating with the application host via the wide area network to transmit operation data to the first and second application controllers for the associated beverage dispensing devices, the operation data including configuration

information, firmware and other information used to operate the associated beverage dispensing devices; and

the network operations center having at least one device monitoring and control unit.

66. **(New)** The system of Claim 65, further comprising:

the local area network supported by wireless transmissions; and

the application host and each application controller comprise a wireless LAN transceiver for communicating via the local area network.

67. **(New)** The system of Claim 65, further comprising:

the local area network supported by wire-line transmissions; and

the application host and each application controller comprise a wire-line LAN transceiver for communicating via the local area network.

68. **(New)** The system of Claim 65, further comprising the application host directly connected to and associated with one of the first and second application controllers.

69. **(New)** The system of Claim 65, further comprising the wide area network interface of the application host comprises a narrowband PCS wireless link to connect the local area network with the network operations center.

70. **(New)** The system of Claim 69, further comprising the wireless transceiver communicating across a digital paging network and messages from the application host stored in at least one dedicated message mailbox for access by the network operations center.

71. **(New)** The system of Claim 65, further comprising the wide area network interface of the application host comprises a wireless two way paging network to connect two or more local area networks with the network operations center to establish an efficient and low cost wide area network.

72. **(New)** The system of Claim 65, further comprising each application controller interfaces via a serial interface having at least one direct sensor coupled with a component of at least one beverage dispensing device.

73. **(New)** The system of Claim 65, wherein the operation data acquired from each beverage dispensing device comprises product dispensing and inventory data and cash levels.

74. **(New)** The system of Claim 65, wherein the operation data acquired from each beverage dispensing device comprises equipment status data.

75. **(New)** The system of Claim 65, further comprising the third party access provided to the network operations center via a web browser connecting across an internet based network.